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Berry Petroleum to explore Uinta Basin for oil and gas

California-based Berry Petroleum Co. announced Monday that it has entered into a joint agreement with the Ute Indian Tribe to explore and develop roughly 125,000 prospective acres of tribal lands in the Uinta Basin in Utah.

In addition, Berry Petroleum said it will purchase an interest in 46,000 acres of fee lands adjacent to or near the tribal acreage.

The combined 171,000-acre block encompasses more than 265 square miles and is located west of the company's Brundage Canyon field, which produces roughly 4,500 barrels of oil per day.

Total acreage will be tested for oil and natural gas deposits. Berry will operate shallow horizons down to roughly 6,500 feet. Berry's ownership will be up to 75 percent in these zones.

Natural gas potential will be the focus of the deeper horizons, primarily in the Wasatch and Mesaverde sections.

Initial drilling will begin this year with a significant increase in drilling expected in 2005.





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